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The Disasters of Jan Nadeltreiber.

BY WILLIAM HOBBS.

There are a multitude of places on this globe that were never heard of since the day of creation; and that never would become known to a soul beyond their own ten miles of circumference, except in those universal discoveries, the tax-gatherers, were it not for some spark of genius which suddenly kindles there, and carries their fame through all countries and all generations. This has been the case many times, and will be the case again. We are destined to hear the sound of names that our fathers never dreamt of; and there are other spots now basking in God's blessed sunshine, of which the world knows and cares nothing, that shall, to our children, become places of worship and pilgrimage.

Something of this sort of glory was cast upon the little town of Raps, in Bohemia, by the hero whose name stands conspicuously at the head of this story; and whose pleasant adventures I flatter myself I am destined still further to diffuse. Jan Nadeltreiber was the son of old Strauss Nadeltreiber, who had, as well as his ancestors before him, for six generations, practised, in the same little place, the most gentlemanly of all professions—that of a tailor, seeing that it was, before all others, used and sanctioned by our father Adam.

Now Jan was, from his boyhood, a remarkable person. His father had known his share of trouble; and, having two sons, both older than Jan, naturally looked, in his old age, to reap some comfort and assistance from their united labors; but they had successfully fled from the shop-board. One had gone for a soldier, and was shot; the other had learned the craft of a weaver, but, being too fond of his pot, had broken his neck by falling into a quarry as he returned home one night from a carousal. Jan was left the sole support for the old man to lean upon, and truly a worthy son he proved himself.

He was as gentle as a dove, and as tender as a lamb. A cross word from his father when he made a cross stitch, would almost break his heart; but half a word of kindness revived him again, and he seldom went long without it; for the old man, though rendered rather testy and crabbed in his temper by his many troubles and disappointments, was naturally of a loving, compassionate disposition; and, moreover, regarded Jan as the apple of his eye. Jan was of a remarkable light, slender, active make, full of life and mettle. This moment he was on the board, stitching away with as much velocity as if he was working for a funeral or a wedding at an hour's notice; the next he was despatching his dinner at the same rate; and the third he had his gun, and was playing among his companions as lithe as a young kitten. If he had a fault, it was being too fond of his fiddle—it was his everlasting delight. One would have thought that his fiddle had lain long enough with jerking his neck some thirty thousand times in a day; but it was in him a sort of universal joint; it never seemed to know what weariness was. His fiddle stood always on the board in a corner by him; and no sooner had he ceased to brandish the needle than he began to brandish the fiddlestick. If he could ever be said to be lazy, it was when his father was gone out to measure, or to try on, and his fiddle being too strong a temptation for him, he would seize upon it, and labor at it with all his might till he spied his father turning the next corner homeward. However, he was a pattern of filial duty with this trifling exception; and now the time was come that his father must die—his mother was dead long before, and he was alone in the world with his fiddle; the whole house, board, trade—what there was of it—all was his.

When he came to take stock, and make an inventory in his head of what he was worth, it was precious little. His father had seldom had much beforehand when he had the whole place to himself; and now, behold! another had come from nobody knew where; had taken a great house opposite, hoisted a tremendous sign, and threatened to carry away every shilling of Jan's business. In the depth of his trouble he took to his fiddle; and in his dream, by which he was assured that could he once save the sum of fifty dollars it would be the seed of a fortune—that he should flourish far beyond the scale of old Strauss; should drive his antagonist in despair from the ground; should, in short, arrive at no less dignity than mayor of Raps.

Jan, as I have said, soon set up with the smallest spice of encouragement; he was, moreover, as light and nimble as a grasshopper, and that little animal would exactly represent him, could it be made to stand on end; his dream, therefore, was enough; he vowed a vow of unconquerable might, and to it he went. Day and night he wrought—work came—it was done; he wanted little—a crust of bread and a merry tune were all he needed. The money grew, the sum was nearly accomplished, when, returning one evening from carrying out some work, behold! his door was open! behold! the lid of his pot, where he deposited his treasure, was off, the money was gone! This was a terrible blow. Jan raised a vast commotion; he did not even fail to insinuate that it might be the interloper opposite; who so likely as he who had his eye continually on Jan's door? But no matter, the thief was clear off, and the only comfort he got from his neighbors was being rated for his stinginess. "Ay!" said they, "this comes of living like a curmudgeon in a great house by yourself, working your eyes out to hoard up money. What must a young man like you do with scraping up pots full of money like a miser? It is a shame, it is a sin, it is a judgment, nothing but the Lord could come of it! At all events, it might afford to have a light in the

house! People are very likely to rob you. They see a house as dark as an oven, they are sure nobody is in it; they go and steal, nobody can see them come out; but, was there a light burning, they would always think there was somebody in, too. At all events you might have a light!"

"There is something in that," said Jan. He was not unreasonable, so he determined to have a light in future, and he fell to work again. Bad as his luck had been, he resolved not to be cast down, he was as diligent and as thrifty as ever; and he resolved, when he became mayor of Raps, to be specially severe on sneaking thieves, who crept into houses that were left to the care of Providence and the municipal authorities. A light was everlastingly burning in his window now, and people, as they passed in the morning, said, "This man must have a good business which requires him to be up so early;" and those who passed in the evening said, "This man must be making a fortune, for he is busy at all hours." He leapt down from his board, at length, with the work that was to complete his sum—went—returned with the future mayor growing rapidly upon him; when, as he turned the corner of the street—men and merces! his house was in a full burst of flame, illuminating, with a ruddy glow, half the town, and all the faces of the inhabitants, who were collected to witness the catastrophe. Money, fiddle, shop-board, all were consumed; and when poor Jan danced and capered in the very ecstasy of his distraction, "Ay!" said his neighbors, "this comes of leaving a light in an empty house. It was just the thing to happen; why don't you get somebody to take care of things in your absence?"

Jan stood corrected; for, as I have said, he was soon touched to the quick; and when his anger was a little abated, he thought there was reason in what they said. So, abating not a jot of his determination to save, he took the very next house, which luckily happened to be at liberty, and he got a journeyman. For a long time it appeared hard and hopeless; there were two months to feed, instead of one; wages to pay; and not much more work done than he could manage himself; but still the money grew, slowly—very slowly—but still it grew; and Jan picked up on a secure place, to his thinking, to conceal it. Alas, poor Jan! he had often, in his heart, grumbled at the slowness of his journeyman's hands, but his eyes had been quick enough; and one morning he found Jan was up, the fellow had cleared out his hiding-place, and was gone. This was more than he could bear. He was perfectly cast down—disheartened—and inconsolable. "Ah!" said his officious neighbors, coming in to console with him, "cheer up, man! there is nothing amiss yet. What signifies a few dollars? You will soon get plenty more with those nimble fingers of yours; you want only somebody to help you to keep them. You must get a wife! Journeyman were thieves from the first generation; you must get married!" "Get married!" thought Jan—he was struck all in a heap at the very mention of it. "Get married!" what! fine clothes to go a wooing in; and fine presents to go a wooing with; and parson's fees, and wedding-dinner, and dancing, and drinking; and then doctor's fees, and nurse's fees, and children without end—it is ruin upon ruin! The fifty dollars and the mayoralty—they might wait till doomsday. Well, that is good," thought Jan, as he took a little more breath, "they first counsel me to get a light—then want house and all in a bundle; next, I must get a journeyman—then want the money; and now they would have me bring upon me more plagues than Moses brought upon Egypt. Nay, nay," thought Jan, "you'll not catch me there neither."

Jan all this time was seated on the shop-board, stitching away at an amazing rate at a garment that the rascally Wagner should have finished to order at six o'clock that morning, instead of absconding with his money; and, ever and anon, so far forgetting his loss, in what appeared to him the ludicrousness of this advice, as freely to laugh out. All that day the idea continued to run in his head; the next, it had lost much of its freshness; the third, it appeared not so odd as awful; the fourth he began to ask himself whether it might be quite so momentous as his imagination had painted it; the fifth, he really thought it was not so bad neither; the sixth, it had so worked round in his head, that it had fairly got on the other side; it appeared clearly to have its advantages, children did not come scampering into the house all at once, like a flock of lambs; a wife might help to gather as well as to spend, might possibly bring something of her own; would be a perpetual watch and housekeeper in his absence; might speak a word of comfort in trouble, where even his fiddle was dumb; on the seventh, he was off! whither?

Why it so happened, that once he had accompanied his father to see an old relation in the mountains of the Bohemian Wald, and there, amongst the dancings who danced to the sound of his fiddle, was a certain bergman's comely daughter, who having got into his head in some odd association with his fiddle, could not be got out of it again; especially as he fancied, from some cause or other, that the simple creature had a lurking fondness for both his music and himself. Away he went, and he was right, the damsel made no objection to his overtures. Tall, stout, fresh pleasant, growth of the open air and the hills, as she was, she never dreamt of despising the little skipping tailor of Raps, though he was a head shorter than herself and not a third of her weight. She had heard his music, and she had never heard of such a thing as family pride; but the old people! they were in perfect hysterics of wrath and contempt. Their daughter! with the exception of one brother, now on a visit to his uncle in Hungary, the sole remnant of an old substantial house, who

had fed their flocks and their herds on the hills for three generations, it was death! poison! pestilence! Nevertheless, as Jan and the damsel were agreed, every thing else was nothing—they were married. Jan, it must be confessed, was exceedingly exasperated that the future mayor of Raps should be thus estimated and treated, and determined to show a little spirit. As his fiddle entered into all his schemes, he resolved to have music at his wedding; and, no sooner did he and his bride issue from the church-door, than out broke the harmony which he had provided. The fiddle played merrily, "you'll repent, repent, you'll repent, repent; you'll repent, repent, and soon, and soon." Thus they played till they reached the inn, where they dined, and then set off for Raps.

It is true there was little happiness in this affair to any one. The old people were full of anger, curses, and threats of disownment; Jan's pride was picked and perforated till he was as sore as if he had been tattooed with his own needle and bodkin; and his wife was completely drowned in sorrow at a parting from her parents, and with no little sense of remorse for her disobedience. Nevertheless, they reached home—things began to assume, gradually, a more composed aspect; Jan loved his wife, she loved him—he was industrious, she was careful; and they trusted, in time, to bring her parents round, when they saw that they were doing well in the world.

Again the saving scheme began to haunt Jan; but he had no luckless notion, which was destined to cost him no little vexation. He had inherited from his father, together with his stock in trade, a stock of old maxims, amongst which one of the chief was, that a woman cannot keep a secret. Acting on this creed, he not only never told his wife of his project of becoming mayor of Raps, but he did not even give her reason to suppose that he had laid up a shilling; and that she might not happen to stumble upon his money, he took care to carry it always about him. It was his delight, when he got into a quiet corner, or as he came along a retired lane from his errands, to take it out, and count it, and calculate when it would amount to this sum and to that, and when the proposed sum would really be his own.

Now it happened one day that having been a good deal absorbed in these speculations, he had loitered a precious piece of time away, and, suddenly coming to himself, he set out, as was his wont, on a kind of easy trot; in which his small, light form, trotting forward, his pale, grey, earnest-looking visage thrown towards the sky, and his long sky-blue coat flying in a stream behind him, he cut one of the most extraordinary figures in the world; and, checking his pace as he entered the town, he involuntarily clapped his hand on his pocket, and, behold! his money was gone! It had slipped away through a hole in his waist.

In the wilderness and bitterness of his loss he turned back, heartily cursing the spinner and weaver of that most detestable piece of bad luck that composed his breeches-pocket; that they had put it together so villainously as to break down with the carriage of a few dollars, half-pennies, thimbles, balls of wax and thread, and a few other sundries, after the trifling wear of seven years nine months and nineteen days. He was pacing, step by step, after his lost treasure, when up came his wife, running like one wild, and telling him, as well as she could, for want of breath, that he must come that instant, for the Ritter of Pluchendorf had brought new liveries for all his servants, and threatened, if he did not see Jan in five minutes, to carry the work over to the other side of the street. Here was perplexity! The money was not to be found, and if it were found in the presence of his wife, he regarded it as no better than lost; but found it was not, and he was forced to tell a lie into the bargain, being caught in the act of searching for something, and say he had lost his thimble; and to make bad worse, he was in danger of losing a good job, and all the Ritter's work for ever as a consequence. Away he ran then, groaning inwardly, at full speed; and arriving out of breath, saw the Ritter's carriage drawn up before his opponent's door—Wormwood upon wormwood! His money was lost! his best customer was lost, and thrown into the hands of his detested enemy. There he beheld him and his man in a prime bustle, from day to day, while his own house was deserted. All people went where the Ritter went, of course; his adversary was flourishing out of all bounds; he had got a horse to ride on and take orders, and was likely to become mayor ten years before Jan had ten dollars of his own. It was too much for even his sanguine temperament; he sank down to the very depths of despair; his fiddle had lost its music; he could not abide to hear it; he sat moody and disconsolate, with a beard an inch long. His wife, for some time, hoped that it would go off; but, seeing it came to this, she began to console and advise, to rouse his courage and his spirits. She told him it was that horse which gave the advantage to his neighbor. While he went trudging on foot, wearing himself, and wasting his time, people came, grew impatient, and would not wait. She offered therefore, to borrow her neighbor's ass for him; and advised him to ride out daily a little way; it would look as though he had business in the country; it would look as if his time was precious; it would look well, and do his health good to the bargain. Jan liked her counsel; it sounded exceedingly discreet; he always thought her a good woman; but he never imagined her half so brave; what a pity a woman could not be trusted with a secret! else had she been a helpmate past all reckoning.

The ass, however, was got—out rode Jan—looked amazingly hurried, and being half crazed with care, people fancied he was half crazed with stress of business; work came in—things went flowing on again; Jan blessed his stars; and as he grasped his cash, he every day stitched it into the crown of his cap. No more pots—no more hiding holes—no more breaches' pockets for him; he put it under the guardianship of his own strong thread and dextrous needle; it went on exceedingly well. Accidents, however, will occur, if men will not trust their wives; and especially if they will not avoid awkward habits. Now Jan had a strange habit of sticking his needles on his breeches' knees, as he sat at work; and sometimes he would have half a dozen on each knee for half a dozen days. His wife told him to take them out when he came down from his board, and often took them out herself, but it was of no use. He was just in this case one day as he rode out to take measure of a gentleman about five mile off. The ass, to his thinking, was in a remarkable brisk mood. Off it went, without whip or spur, at a good active trot, and not satisfied with trotting, soon fairly proceeded to a gallop. Jan was full of wonder at the ass's mood; he was full of wonder at his own horse, that during his hour's ride, than the exercises of his goose and sleeve-board for a whole day; but now he was fain to pull it in. It was to no purpose—faster than ever it dashed on—prancing, running sideways, wincing, and beginning to show a most ugly temper. What in the name of all Balaam's could possess the animal, he could not for his life conceive; the only chance of safety appeared to be in clinging, with both arms and legs, to it like a boa constrictor to its victim; when, shy! away it flew, as if it were driven by a legion of devils. In a moment it stopped; down went its head—up went its infernal heels—and Jan found himself some ten yards off in the middle of a pond. He escaped drowning—you might as easily have drowned a rush; but his cap was gone—the dollars in the crown had sunk it past recovery. He came home dripping like a drowned mouse, with a most deplorable tale, but with no more knowledge of the cause of his disaster than the man in the moon, till he tore his fingers on the needles in abstracting his wet clothes.

Fortune now seemed to speak as plainly as she could speak—Jan, confide in your wife. You see all your schemes without her fail. Open your heart to her; deal fairly—generously—and you will reap the sweets of it." It was all in vain; he had not yet come to his senses. But, goodbye to the ass! The only thing he resolved to mount was his shop-board; that bore him well, and brought him continual good, could he only contrive to keep it.

His wife was from the mountains; she therefore liked the sight of trees. Now, in Jan's back-yard there was neither tree nor turf; so she got some tubs, and in them she placed a variety of air-trees, which made a pleasant appearance; and gave a help to her imagination of the nobilities of her native scenes. In one of these tubs Jan conceived the singular idea of depositing his treasure. "Nobody will meddle with the tubs," he thought; so, accordingly, from week to week he concealed in them his acquisitions. This had gone a long time. He had been out collecting some debts; he had succeeded beyond his hopes; he came back exulting; the sun was saved; and in the gladness of his heart, he had bought his wife a new gown. He bounded into the house with the lightness of seventeen; his wife was not there—he looked into the yard—saints and angels!—what is that? He beheld his wife busy with the trees; they were uprooted, and laid on the ground, and every particle of soil was thrown out of the tubs. In the delirium of consternation he went to ask what she had been doing—"Oh, the trees did not flourish, poor things; they looked sickly and pinning; she determined to give them some soil more suitable to their nature; she had thrown the other earth in the river at the bottom of the yard." "And you have thrown into the river the hoarding of three years—the money which had cost me many a weary day, and many an anxious night; in the money which had made our fortunes; in short, that would have made me mayor of Raps," exclaimed Jan, perfectly off his guard to the exposure of his secret. "Why did you not tell me of this?" said his wife, kindly, gently, and self-reproachfully. "Ay, that is a question," said he. And it was a question; for, spite of his apparent testiness, it had occurred to his mind some dozen of times; and now it came back with such an emotion, that even when he thought he treated it with contempt, it had fixed itself upon his better reason, and never left him till it had worked a most fortunate revelation. He said to himself, "Had I told my wife from the first, it could not possibly have happened worse; and it is very likely it would have happened for the better; for the future, then, be it so."

Wherefore he unfolded to her the whole mystery of his troubles and his hopes. Now Mrs. Jan Nadeltreiber had great cause to feel herself offended, most grievously offended; but she was not of a hasty temper. She was a sweet, tender, patient creature, who desired her husband's honor and prosperity beyond everything. She sat down, and in the most mild, yet acute and able manner, laid down to him a plan of operations, and promised him such aids and succors, that, struck at once with shame, contrition and admiration, he sprang up, clasped her to his heart, calling her the very gem of womanhood, and skipped three or four times across the floor like a man gone out of senses. The truth is, however, he was but just come into them.

From this day a new life was begun in Jan's house. The he sat at his work—there sat his wife by his side, aiding and contriving with a woman's wit, a woman's love, and a woman's address. She was worth a journeyman. Work

never came in faster, never gave such satisfaction, never brought in so much money; and besides, such harmony and affection was there in the house—such delectable discourses did they hold together.—There was nothing to conceal; Jan's thoughts flowed like a great stream, and when they grew a little wild and visionary, as they were apt to do, his wife smoothed and reduced them to sobriety, with such a delicate tact, that, so far from feeling offended, he was delighted beyond expression with her prudence. The fifty dollars were raised in almost no time; and as if the prognostic of their being the seed of a fortune were to be immediately fulfilled, they came in opportunely to purchase a lot of cloth, which more than trebled their cost, and gave infinite satisfaction to his customers. Jan saw that the tide was rapidly rising with him, and his wife urged him to push it on with it; to take a larger house; to get more hands and to cut such a figure as should at once eclipse his rival. The thing was done; but, as their capital was still found scanty for such an establishment, his wife resolved to try what she could do to increase it.

I should have said, had not the current of Jan's disasters run too strong upon me, that his wife's parents were dead, without giving her any token of reconciliation; a circumstance which, although it cut her to the heart, did not quite cast her down, feeling that she had done nothing but what a parent might forgive; being all of us, creatures alike to err, and demanding, alike, some little indulgence for our weakness and our fancies. The brother was now sole representative of the family, and knowing the generosity of his nature, she determined to pay him a visit, although in a condition very unfit for travelling. She went; her brother received her with all his early affection; in his house her first child was born; and so much did she and her husband win upon his heart, that, when the time came that he must return, nothing would serve but he must take her himself. She had been so loud in the praises of Jan, that he determined to go and take him by the hand. It would have done any one good to see this worthy mountaineer setting forth; himself firmly seated on his great horse, his sister behind him, and the brat slung safely on one side, cradled in his coruhopper. It would have been equally pleasant to see him set down his charge at the door of Jan's new house, and behold with wonder that merry mimic of men, all smiles and gesticulations, come forth to receive them. The contrast between Jan and his brother-in-law was truly amusing. He had a shadow-like homeliness, so light and dry that every wind threatened to blow him before it; the bergman with a countenance that like the setting sun, the stature of a giant, and limbs like an elephant. Jan watched with considerable anxiety the experiment of his kinsman's seating himself in a chair; the chair, however, stood firm, and the good man surveyed Jan in return, with a curious and critical air, as doubtful whether he must hold him in contempt for the want of that solid matter of which his himself had too much. Jan's good qualities, however, got the better of him.—"The man is a man," said he to himself, very philosophically, "and he is good to my sister, he shall know of it." So, as he took his departure, he seized one of Jan's hand with a cordial grip, that was felt through every limb, and into the other he put a bag of one thousand dollars.—"My sister shall not be a beggar in her husband's house; this is properly her own and much good may it do you."

I need not prolong my story; the new tailor soon fled before the star of Jan's ascendancy. Jan was speedily installed in the office of mayor of Raps, in his eyes the highest of all earthly dignities; and if he had one trouble left, it was only in the reflection that he might have obtained his wish years before, had he better understood the heart of a good woman.

MORAL CHARACTER.—There is nothing which adds so much to the beauty and power of a man as a good character. It dignifies him in every station, exalts him in every period of life. Such a character is more to be desired than everything else on earth. No servile fool, no cringing sycophant, no treacherous house-seeker, ever bore such a character; the pure joys of righteousness never spring in such a person. If young men but knew how much a good character would dignify and exalt them, how glorious it would make their prospects even in this life: never should we find them yielding to the groveling and base born purposes of human nature.

RESULT OF FASHIONS.—We noticed a beautiful poodle dog trotting along our streets yesterday, who had been completely shaved, except two graceful tufts descending from either side of the upper jaw, forming as complete a moustache as the most exquisite could wish for. The little creature seemed to realise his importance.

From the New York Mirror, Oct. 4. Prize Ode to Powers' Greek Slave. The Derby stake has been won by Augustus Dugan, of this city. As the Public are well aware, Mr. C. L. Derby, the Attorney of "The Cosmopolitan Art and Literary Association," purchased some time since, the original statue of Powers' Greek Slave, as one of the prizes to be distributed by the Association, established at Sandusky City, Ohio. Mr. Derby then offered a prize of one hundred dollars for the best Ode written on this beautiful creation of American genius; and selected the following gentlemen as judges to decide upon the merits of the offerings.—Hayard Taylor of the Tribune, Richard Storrs Willis of the Musical World, and H. Fuller of the Evening Mirror, who met at the St. Nicholas Hotel, on Tuesday evening, Oct. 3. About two hundred contributions were sent in, with the writer's names enclosed in sealed envelopes, with the understanding that only the name of the winner should be known. This condition was strictly observed; and the committee after carefully reading them, and discussing the merits and defects of the fifteen or twenty worth considering, unanimously decided in favor of the following:

ODE TO THE GREEK SLAVE. DEDICATED TO THE C. A. AND L. ASSOCIATION.

O Greek! by more than Moslem fetters thrall'd Unhappy prison of a radiant thought. Where life is half reveal'd; And beauty dwells, created, not enwrought, Why hauntest thou my dreams, enrobed in light, And atmosphere with purity, wherein, Mine own soul is transfused, and glows bright As though an angel smelt away its sin.

O chastity of Art! Behold! this maiden shape makes solitude Of all the busy mart; Beneath her soul's immeasurable woe, All seasons vision lies subdued, And from her veiled eyes the flow Of tears, is inward turned upon her heart, While on her prisoning lips Her eloquent spirit swoons. And from the lustrous lovers' eyelids Falls patient glory as from clouded moons: Severe in vestal grace, yet warm And flexible with the delicate glow of youth. She stands, the sweet embodiment of truth; Her pure thoughts clustering around her form, Like seraph garments, whiter than the snows Which the wild sea upthrows.

O genius! thou canst chain Not marble only, but the human soul, And melt the heart with soft control, And awake such reverence in the brain, That man may be forgiven, If in the ancient days he dwelt Idolatrous with sculptured life, and knelt To Beauty more than Heaven!

Genius is worshipped! for its works adore The infinite source of all their glorious thought. So blessed Art, like Nature, is o'erfraught With such a wondrous store Of hallowed influence, that we who gaze Aright on her creations, happily pray and praise: Go, then, fair Slave! and in thy fetters teach What Heaven's inspired genius hath designed! Be thou Evangel of true Art, and preach The freedom of the Mind!

On the Venom of Serpents. The following, by S. Gilman, L. L. D., published in the St. Louis "Medical Journal," is the most interesting article we ever read on the subject:

There is much in the history and habits of the reptile tribes, however repulsive they may be in appearance, that is very interesting. During a sojourn of two or three months in the interior of Arkansas, which appears to me to be the paradise of reptiles, I paid some attention to that branch of history called ophiology. I found four distinct varieties of rattlesnakes, (crotalus), of which the Crotalus Horridus and Crotalus Kirtlandii are by far the most numerous. The former is the largest serpent in North America. The family of moccasin snakes (Coluber) is also quite numerous, these being not less than ten varieties, most of which being quite as venomous as the rattlesnake. By dissecting great numbers of different species I learned that the anatomical structure of the poisoning apparatus is similar in all the different varieties of venomous serpents. It consists of a strong framework of bone, with its appropriate muscles in the upper part of the head, resembling, and being in fact, a pair of jaws, but externally to the jaws proper, and much stronger. To these is attached by a ginglymoid articulation, one or more movable fangs on each side, just at the verge of the mouth, capable of being erected at pleasure. These fangs are very hard, sharp and crooked, like the claws of a cat, and hooked, backward with a hollow from the base to near the point. I have occasionally seen a thin slit bone divide this hollow, making two. At their base is found a small sack containing two or three drops of venom, which resembles thin honey. The sack is so connected with the of the fang during its erection, that a slight upward pressure forces the venom into the fangs at its base, and it makes its exit at a small slit or opening near the point, with considerable force; thus it is carried to the bottom of any wound made by the fang. Unless the fangs are erected for battle, they lie concealed in the upper part of the mouth, sunk between the external and internal jaw bones, somewhat like a pen-knife blade shut up in its handle, where they are covered by a fold of membrane which encloses them like a sheath—this is the vagina dentis. There can be no doubt that these fangs are frequently broken off or shed, as the head grows broader, to make room for new ones nearer the verge of the mouth, for within the vagina dentis of a very large crotalus horridus, I found no less than five fangs on each side—in all stages of formation—the smallest in a half-pulpy or cartilaginous state, the next something harder, the third still more perfect, and so on to the main, well-set, perfect fang. Each of these teeth had a well-defined cavity, like the main one. Three fangs on each side were found in copper heads, vipers, and others.

The process of robbing serpents of their venom is easily accomplished by the aid of chloroform, a few drops of which stupefies them. If, while they are under its influence, they are carefully seized by the neck, and the vagina dentis held out of the way by an assistant, with a pair of

forceps, and the fang is erected and gently pressed upward, the venom will be seen issuing from the fang, and dropping by a bit of sponge, or caught in a vial, or on the point of a lancet. After robbing several serpents in this manner, they were found, after two days, to be as highly charged as ever with venom of equal intensity with that first taken.

During the process of robbing several species of serpents, I inoculated several small but vigorous and perfectly healthy vegetables with the point of a lancet well charged with venom. The next day they were withered and dead, looking as though they had been scorched with lightning. In attempting to preserve a few drops of venom, for future experiments, in a small vial with two or three parts of alcohol, it was found in a short time to have lost its venomous properties. But after mixing the venom with aqua ammonia, or spirits of turpentine, or oil of peppermint or of cinnamon, or of cloves or with nitric or sulphuric acid, it still seemed to act with undiminished energy. It is best preserved, however, for future use by trituration with refined sugar or sugar of milk.

A very fine, large cotton-wood snake, being captured by putting a shoe-string around him, became excessively furious, striking at even the crack of a small riding whip. Finding himself a prisoner, without hope of escape, he turned his deadly weapons on his own body, striking repeatedly his well-charged fangs deeply into his flesh. Notwithstanding this he was put into a small basket, and was carried forward. In one hour after, he was found dead, and no amount of irritation could excite the least indication of life.

A large rattlesnake, beheaded instantly with a hoe, would an hour and a half after strike at anything that pinched its tail. Of several persons who were testing their firmness of nerve by trying to hold the hand steady while the serpent struck at it, not one could be found whose hand would not recoil in spite of his resolution; and one man, a great bully, by-the-by, was struck on the naked throat with considerable force by the headless trunk of the serpent, and staggered back, fainted and fell, from terror.

Seven venomous serpents belonging to five different species, were made to fraternize and dwell amicably in one den. A beautiful pair of long bodied speckled snakes, known as king snakes, known to be fangless, and consequently without venom, were duly installed as members of the family. Some uneasiness were perceivable among the older of the members, but no attempt was made to destroy the intruders—though they might have been killed instantly. The next morning four of the venomous serpents were found to have been destroyed by the king-snakes, and one was still within their coil, and the two remaining ones would make no effort at self defence. A large rattlesnake seemed stupid and indifferent to his fate. He could not be made to threaten or give warning with his rattles. The smallest king-snake was afterwards inoculated with the poison of one of the serpents he had destroyed, and died immediately after—thus evincing that they must have exercised some power besides physical force to overcome their fellow creatures.

In short, the result of a great number of experiments performed with the venom on a great variety of serpents, seem to lead to the following conclusions:

1. That the venom of all serpents, acts as a poison in a similar manner.

2. That the venom of some varieties is far more active than that of others.

3. That a variety of the coluber, known as the cotton-mouth, is the most venomous serpent in Arkansas.

4. That the venom of serpents destroys all forms of organized life, vegetable as well as animal.

5. That alcohol, if brought in contact with the venom, is, to a certain extent, an antidote.

6. That serpents do possess the power of fascinating small animals, and that this power is identical with mesmerism.

7. That the blood of small animals, destroyed by the venom of serpents, bears a close resemblance to that of animals destroyed by lightning or hydro-cyanic acid; it loses its power of coagulation and cannot be long kept from putrefaction.

WHICH IS THE HAPPY MAN?—We know a man in Michigan who lives on the interest of his money, and that is only \$70 per annum. He has, it is true, a small house with one room in it, three or four acres of land, and keeps a cow, a couple of pigs and a few hens, yet he and his wife always appear cheerful and contented, and preserve a respectable appearance on their \$70 per annum.

We know of a man in New York who expends \$15,000 per annum for his household expenses. He pays for his gas light more than the whole income of the Michigan man. He makes annual holiday presents to more than the whole amount of the Michigan man. It costs him a sum six times as large as the whole income of our philosopher to support a single waiter.

We know them both very well, and we think our Michigan friend by far the happiest, healthiest, and most enviable man. They are both advanced in years. The cheapness of books and papers place abundance of rational enjoyment in the power of the countryman; an accumulation of physical ills, and a necessity for intense activity deprives the citizen of as in and quiet enjoyment and reflection. The former, in the probable course of events, will die of old age at ninety, the latter at seventy. Such is the distribution of happiness and wealth.

One of our citizens was thus accosted by his landlord: "As everything is on the rise, I feel it my duty to raise your rent." Citizen replied, "Sir, I am truly thankful, for times are so hard, that it is really impossible to raise it myself."